Amendments to the Claims

The following Listing of Claims replaces all prior listings, and versions, of claims in the present application.

<u>Listing of Claims:</u>

1. (Currently amended) A method of applying a sender-specific mail policy, the method comprising:

maintaining a list of computer system users and respective sender-specific mail policies associated with each of said computer system users, each of said sender-specific mail policies indicating at least one of how and whether a user message, received from one of said computer system users, is to be further transmitted across a network;

receiving a mail message intended for further transmission across said network, said mail message indicating a sender thereof;

determining whether said mail message contains a digital signature;

attempting to verify said digital signature in said mail message;

after said digital signature is verified, said mail message is determined to contain a verified digital signature,

after a user corresponding to said verified digital signature is determined to correspond to said sender indicated in said mail message, applying to said mail message at least one of said sender-specific mail policies associated with said user; and

after said mail message ~~is not determined to contain any digital signature, or~~ is not determined to contain said verified digital signature corresponding to said sender indicated in said mail message, applying a default mail policy to said mail message, wherein:

said default mail policy indicates at least one of how and whether a sent message, received from a sender omitted from said list of computer system users, is to be further transmitted across said network; and

said default mail policy is more restrictive than each of said sender-specific mail policies.

2. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of applying at least one of said sender-specific mail policies comprises determining whether said mail message complies with said at least one of said sender-specific mail policies;

after determining said mail message does comply with said at least one of said sender-specific mail policies, allowing transmission of said mail message; and

after not determining said mail message complies with said at least one of said sender-specific mail policies, applying appropriate measures to said mail message.

3. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of applying said default mail policy to said mail message comprises determining whether said mail message complies with said default mail policy;

after determining said mail message does comply with said default mail policy, allowing transmission of said mail message; and

after not determining said mail message complies with said default mail policy, applying appropriate measures to said mail message.

4. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said default mail policy is triggered by more criteria than each of said sender-specific mail policies.

5. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of applying said default mail policy to said mail message comprises rejecting said mail message.

6. (Previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, comprising receiving the mail message in a boundary agent, the mail message being intended for further transmission over an external computer network.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Canceled)

9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently amended) A local computer network, comprising:

a plurality of user computers;

a mail server; and

at least one connection to a second computer network, such that outgoing mail messages are sent from said user computers to destination computers connected to said second computer network, and such that incoming mail messages are sent to said user computers from transmitting computers connected to said second computer network,

wherein said mail server maintains a list of users of said user computers and respective sender-specific mail policies associated with each of said users, each of said sender-specific mail policies indicating at least one of how and whether a mail message, received from one of said computer system users, is to be further transmitted across said second computer network;

wherein, after said mail server receives an outgoing mail message, said outgoing mail message indicating a sender thereof, said mail server is configured to determine whether said outgoing mail message contains a digital signature and, if so, is configured to attempt to verify said digital signature in said outgoing mail message; and

after said digital signature is verified, said outgoing mail message is determined to contain a verified digital signature,

after a user corresponding to said verified digital signature is determined to correspond to said sender indicated in said outgoing mail message, said mail server is configured to apply to said outgoing mail message at least one of said sender-specific mail policies associated with said user, and

after said outgoing mail message is not determined to contain any digital signature, or is not determined to contain said verified digital signature corresponding to said sender indicated in said outgoing mail message, said mail server is configured to apply a default mail policy to said outgoing mail message, wherein:

said default mail policy indicates at least one of how and whether a mail message, received from a sender omitted from said list of users, is to be further transmitted; and

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said default mail policy is more restrictive than each of said sender-specific mail policies.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously presented) A local computer network as claimed in claim 10, wherein, after said mail server determines whether said outgoing mail message complies with at least one of said sender-specific mail policies:

after determining said outgoing mail message does comply with at least one of said sender-specific mail policies, said mail server is configured to allow transmission of said outgoing mail message; and

after not determining said outgoing mail message complies with at least one of said sender-specific mail policies, said mail server is configured to apply appropriate measures to said outgoing mail message.

13. (Previously presented) A local computer network as claimed in claim 10, wherein, when said mail server is configured to determine whether said outgoing mail message complies with said default mail policy:

after determining said outgoing mail message does comply with said default mail policy, said mail server is configured to allow transmission of said outgoing mail message; and

after not determining said outgoing mail message complies with said default mail policy, said mail server is configured to apply appropriate measures to said outgoing mail message.

14. (Previously presented) A local computer network as claimed in claim 10, wherein said default mail policy is triggered by more criteria than each of said sender-specific mail policies.

15. (Previously presented) A local computer network as claimed in claim 10, wherein said default mail policy is to reject said outgoing mail message.

16. (Currently amended) A computer program product, ~~for use~~ on <u>a non-transitory storage medium of</u> a mail server in a local computer network, said local computer network further comprising:

a plurality of user computers; and

at least one connection to a second computer network, such that outgoing mail messages are sent from said user computers to destination computers connected to said second computer network, and such that incoming mail messages are sent to said user computers from transmitting computers connected to said second computer network,

wherein said computer program product is configured to cause said mail server to maintain a list of users of said user computers and respective sender-specific mail policies associated with each of said users, each of said sender-specific mail policies indicating at least one of how and whether a message, received from one of said computer system users, is to be further transmitted across said second computer network;

wherein, when said mail server receives an outgoing mail message, said outgoing mail message indicating a sender thereof, said computer program product is configured to cause said mail server to determine whether said outgoing mail message contains a digital signature and, if so, attempt to verify said digital signature in said outgoing mail message; and

after said digital signature is verified, said outgoing mail message is determined to contain a verified digital signature,

after a user corresponding to said verified digital signature is determined to correspond to said sender indicated in said outgoing mail message, said computer program product is configured to cause said mail server to apply to said outgoing mail message at least one of said sender-specific mail policies associated with said user, and

after said outgoing mail message ~~is not determined to contain any digital signature, or~~ is not determined to contain said verified digital signature corresponding to said sender indicated in said <u>outgoing</u> mail message, said computer program product is configured to cause said mail server to apply a default mail policy to said outgoing mail message, wherein:

said default mail policy indicates at least one of how and whether a mail

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message, received from a sender omitted from said list of users, is to be further transmitted; and

said default mail policy is more restrictive than each of said sender-specific mail policies.

17. (New) A method as claimed in claim 1 further comprising, after said mail message is not determined to contain any digital signature corresponding to said sender indicated in said mail message, applying said default mail policy to said mail message.

18. (New) A local computer network as claimed in claim 10 further comprising, after said outgoing mail message is not determined to contain any digital signature corresponding to said sender indicated in said outgoing mail message, said mail server is configured to apply said default mail policy to said outgoing mail message.

19. (New) A computer program product as claimed in claim 16, wherein said local computer network further comprises being configured to, after said outgoing mail message is not determined to contain any digital signature corresponding to said sender indicated in said outgoing mail message, applying said default mail policy to said outgoing mail message.